Understanding Organisational Health in Lutheran Schools: Exploring the Critical Link Between Leadership, School Climate and Staff Well-being
Overview

Introducing Organisational Health

In this part, delegates will be introduced to the organisational health framework. We will consider the relationship between occupational stress and morale, and will gain an understanding of the major personal and organisational factors which contribute to staff well-being and organisational performance.

The Critical Role of Leadership in LEA

In this part, delegates will explore the critical role of leadership in driving staff motivation and school performance. We will consider the relationship between leadership and school climate, and examine ways in which school leaders can build a high-performing work environment that engages and motivates staff.

Working With Organisational Health Data

In this part, delegates will explore the best ways in which to link organisational health data to school improvement strategies. We will examine previous ‘best practice’ that has led to sustained improvements in the motivation of staff and the performance of schools, and will practice the interpretation of sample reports.

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During 2004, 15 Lutheran Schools participated in a comprehensive assessment of leadership, school climate and staff well-being. The survey instrument used in this project has been used extensively in the education sector throughout Australia – providing an opportunity to examine the quality of people management practices in Lutheran schools.

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<th>Invited</th>
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<th>Response Rate</th>
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<td>Range for all Schools</td>
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<td>40-100%</td>
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<td>Median for all Schools</td>
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<td>84.0%</td>
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</table>
School Organisational Health

- Individual Characteristics
- Organisational Characteristics
- Staff Motivation
- School Performance
- Government
- Parents
- LEA
- Students
Is Conventional Wisdom Misleading?

Is the culture of the system really that different from the culture in individual schools?

Are conditions, resources, and structures more important than culture in motivating and retaining staff?

Is there really a link between staff satisfaction, student learning outcomes, and parent satisfaction?

Is teaching in LEA really stressful?

Are stress and morale really the opposite sides of the one coin?

Are younger staff really that different from older staff?
Humorous Definition

*Stress* can be defined as the conflict created when one’s mind overrides the body’s basic desire to choke the living daylights out of some !#$! who desperately deserves it!
Distress refers to the negative feelings that people experience as a result of their work (e.g., anxiety, depression, frustration, worry)

Morale refers to the positive feelings that people experience as a result of their work (e.g., energy, enthusiasm, pride, team spirit)
Emotion is the Key to Staff Motivation

Employee Satisfaction

Distress
Low
High

Low
High
Presenteeism

Utopia

Go, go, go ...

Job Satisfaction

Employee Well-Being

Morale

Low
High

Low
High

#$*!#!

Quality of Work Life

Emotion is the Key to Staff Motivation
Key Drivers of School Organisational Health

Based on Hart & Cooper (2001)
## Research Evidence in Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Morale</th>
<th>Individual Distress</th>
<th>Workplace Morale</th>
<th>Workplace Distress</th>
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<td><strong>Organisational Climate</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Emotionality</strong></td>
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<td>Emotionality</td>
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<td>Positive Work Experiences</td>
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<td>Negative Work Experience</td>
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<td><strong>Sociability</strong></td>
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<th><strong>Workplace Morale</strong></th>
<th><strong>Workplace Distress</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Emotionality</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Organisational Climate</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Linking Leadership to Parent Perceptions

Core business outcomes are not necessarily driven by those factors that are typically believed to be important!

Based on Excellence Through Leadership (Victoria) and School Improvement Review (Tasmania)
Making a Difference to Student Outcomes

The quality of leadership and school climate is critical in driving the quality of student well-being and learning outcomes.

Based on DEEM (Victoria)
Critical Aspects of Team Climate & Motivation

Feedback
- Goal Congruence
- Participative Decision-Making
- Professional Growth
- Professional Interaction
- Role Clarity
- Supportive Leadership
- Work Demands

Individual Distress
- Individual Morale
- School Distress
- School Morale
School Organisational Health Questionnaire

Generic Components
- Career Opportunities
- Excessive Work Demands
- Feedback
- Goal Congruence
- Participative Decision-Making
- Professional Growth
- Professional Interaction
- Role Clarity
- Supportive Leadership

School Components
- Effective Discipline Policy
- Curriculum Coordination
- Learning Environment
- Misbehaviour (School)
- Misbehaviour (Classroom)
- Student Decision-Making
- Student Orientation
- Student Motivation

Motivational Components
- Individual Distress
- Individual Morale
- Job Satisfaction
- School Distress
- School Morale

Christian Community
Levels of Organisational Health

(a) Government Schools
(b) LEA Schools
(c) Public Sector
(d) Private Sector
Organisational Health in LEA

1. Individual Morale
2. School Morale
3. Supportive Leadership
4. Role Clarity
5. Professional Interaction
6. Participative Decision-Making
7. Goal Congruence
8. Appraisal & Recognition
9. Professional Growth
10. Job Satisfaction
11. Career Opportunities
12. Curriculum Coordination
13. Effective Discipline Policy
14. Christian Community
15. Student Orientation
16. Student Motivation
17. Student Decision-Making
18. Learning Environment
19. Student Misbehaviour
20. Classroom Misbehaviour
21. Excessive Work Demands
22. Individual Distress
23. School Distress

LEGEND
- Aust. Education Benchmark
- Lutheran Education Australia 2004(538)

Improvement

Motivation
Empathy
Clarity
Engagement
Learning
Outcomes

1-2, 22-23
3
4
5-7
8-9
10-21
Differences Among Occupational Groups

LEGEND

- Teaching 2004(326)
- Non Teaching 2004(190)
- Principal 2004(14)
What is Behind Supportive Leadership

People
- Manages People
- Seeks Feedback
- Builds Community Relationships
- Supports Staff (Client Difficulties)

Development
- Coaches Staff
- Effectively Manages Change
- Values Training & Development

Core Business
- Effectively Manages Projects
- Provides Direction
- Creates a Learning Environment
- Is Entrepreneurial
- Builds Own Skills

Supportive Leadership
- being approachable
- knowing the problems staff face
- supporting staff
- communicating well with staff
- can be relied upon
School Leadership - External Benchmark Comparisons

**LEGEND**

1. Manages People
2. Seeks Feedback
3. Builds Community Relationships
4. Supports Staff (Parents & Students)
5. Coaches Staff
6. Effectively Manages Change
7. Values Training & Development
8. Builds Skills
9. Entrepreneurship
10. Creates a Learning Environment
11. Provides Direction
12. Effectively Manages Projects

PUBLIC SECTOR!
PRIVATE SECTOR!
EXPERIENCED PRINS!
LUTHERAN EDUCATION AUSTRALIA 2004 (538)
Range of LEA Principal Ratings

LEGEND

1. Manages People
2. Seeks Feedback
3. Builds Community Relationships
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5. Coaches Staff
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Differences Among Occupational Groups

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**People Focus**

**Development Focus**

**Core Business Focus**

Improvement
Research in a wide variety of organisations, including those in the education sector, demonstrates that the four key elements of Empathy, Clarity, Engagement and Learning underpin the quality of the team environment. More importantly, employee opinion data and the evaluation of development practices in a range of organisations has shown that these key elements underpin employee motivation, discretionary effort, and customer experience.
Best Practice Model of People Management

Leadership and Managerial Culture
- Empathy
- Clarity
- Engaging
- Learning

## Strength of Relationship
- turn point
## Key Drivers of Staff Satisfaction & Motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>School Distress</th>
<th>Individual Morale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supportive Leadership</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Supportive Leadership</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td>Professional Interaction</td>
<td>Goal Congruence</td>
<td>Role Clarity</td>
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<td>Participative Decision-Making</td>
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Best Practice Comparison – LEA 2004
Implications for Continued Improvement

Improving the performance of LEA schools is an ongoing process that requires integration of many data sources and the implementation of holistic action learning programs. However, a crucial element in enhancing satisfaction and performance in LEA schools is the creation of team environments that engage and motivate all staff.

Leadership & Managerial Behaviour

- focus on people
- focus on development
- focus on core business

Create an Engaging Team Culture

- feedback
- goal congruence
- participative decision-making
- professional development
- professional interaction
- role clarity
- supportive leadership

Organisational Performance

Staff Motivation
Strategic Approach to Improvement

Cultural Change Process:
- Organisation-wide accountability and development framework
- Developing leadership and managerial capability
- Ensuring ownership and commitment to the change process

Measurement and Monitoring Systems:
- Quality measurement tools and processes
- Outcome and development focused
- Continuous improvement and performance management systems

Research and Knowledge Building:
- Establishing what will actually make a difference
- Communication strategies that are focused on outcomes
- Integration with all elements of the organisation’s people systems
Knowledge building in the area of people management is critical to achieving sustained improvements in people management capability. However, knowledge on its own will not lead to changed behaviour. It is necessary to provide a context in which this knowledge can be applied and transformed into new ways of interacting and behaving. This can be achieved through a workgroup project supported by focused coaching. It is critical, however, for all employees to be engaged in the change process. These four elements are the essence of a quality action-learning process.
Gaining Traction – A Hierarchy of Need

For an improvement strategy to have the desired effect of bringing about change in the quality of your workgroup’s people management culture, the change process must be part of a strategic development plan and be clearly seen as a ‘win-win’ for all stakeholders.
School Improvements Are Possible

**Primary**

**Secondary**

**LEGEND**

1. Morale  
2. Supportive Leadership  
3. Professional Interaction  
4. Goal Congruence
Organisation-Wide Improvements in Morale

**Victorian Government Schools**

**Private Sector Organisations**

- **Aerospace Industry**
- **Finance Sector**

**ISRC**

**DE&T**

**2000**

**2001**

**2002**
Reducing Workers’ Compensation Premiums

$577,352 reduction in three years in one secondary school!
Achieving These Gains

Surveys are merely tools or decision-aides in the change process and will not automatically lead to improvements:

- Properly diagnose the real issues
- The leadership team must be champions for change
- All staff must be involved in the diagnostic and change process
- Appropriate support must be provided to ‘struggling’ schools and work teams
- Appropriate support must be provided to ‘disaffected’ staff
- There must be accountability at all stages of the change process
Questions …

What questions do you have about:

- Organisational health in Lutheran schools
- The School Organisational Health Questionnaire:
  - Accuracy (i.e., reliability and validity)
  - Completion (e.g., administration and logistics)
  - Acceptance in school environments
- The role of organisational health in delivering better educational services
- The use of organisational health data as part of the school improvement process
- Anything else of interest and/or concern …